I. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) Process for obtaining hydrofluoroethers of formula (I):

$$A\text{-}(R_f)_{n0}\text{-}CF(R_{f1})\text{-}O\text{-}R_h \qquad (I)$$

wherein:

n0 is zero or 1;

R_f is a bivalent radical:

C_1-C_{20}, ~~preferably C_2-C_{12},~~ linear or branched (per)fluoroalkylene, optionally containing one or more oxygen atoms;

-CFW'O-(R_{f2})-CFW-, wherein W and W', equal or different, are F, CF_3; R_{f2} is a (per)fluoropolyoxyalkylene containing one or more of the following units, statistically distributed along the chain, (C_3F_6O); (CFWO) wherein W is as above; (C_2F_4O), ($CF_2(CF_2)_zCF_2$) wherein z is an integer equal to 1 or 2; ($CH_2CF_2CF_2$);

R_{f1} is F or a C_1-C_{10} linear or branched (per)fluoroalkyl or (per)fluorooxyalkyl radical;

R_h is a C_1-C_{20}, ~~preferably C_1-C_{10}~~ linear, branched when possible, saturated or unsaturated when possible alkyl, or C_7-C_{20} alkylaryl, optionally containing heteroatoms selected from F, O, N, S, P, Cl; and/or functional groups preferably selected from $-SO_2F$, $-CH=CH_2$, $-CH_2CH=CH_2$ and NO_2;

A = F, ($R_{h2}O$)-$CF(R_{f4})$-, -C(O)F, wherein

- R_{h2}, equal to or different from R_h, has the R_h meanings;
- R_{f4}, equal to or different from R_{f1}, has the R_{f1} meanings;

wherein a mono- or bifunctional carbonyl compound of formula:

$$B\text{-}R_f\text{-}C(O)R_{f1} \qquad (IV)$$

wherein B is F or $-C(O)R_{f4}$, R_f, R_{f1} and R_{f4} being as above,

is reacted with at least one equivalent of a fluoroformate of formula:

$$R\text{-}OC(O)F \qquad (III)$$

wherein [[R – R_h or R_{h2}]] $\underline{R = R_h \text{ or } R_{h2}}$ as above;

in the presence of an ion fluoride compound (catalyst) and of a dipolar aprotic organic compound, liquid and inert under the reaction conditions.

2. (Original) A process according to claim 1, wherein the (C_3F_6O) unit of R_{f2} can be ($CF_2CF(CF_3)O$) or ($CF(CF_3)CF_2O$).

3. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein in formula (I) R_{f1} and R_{f4} of A, independently the one from the other, are F, CF_3.

4. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein when R_f of formula (I) is a (per)fluoroalkylene, R_f is selected from the following groups:
$-CF_2-$, $-CF_2CF_2-$, $-CF_2CF_2CF_2-$, $-CF_2(CF_3)CF-$; when R_f contains one oxygen atom it ~~preferably~~ is $-CF_2(OCF_3)CF-$.

5. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein R_{f2} is a perfluoropolyoxyalkylene chain having number average molecular weight from 66 to 12,000 ~~, preferably from 100 to 5,000, more preferably from 300 to 2,000~~.

6. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, wherein when R_{f2} is a perfluorooxyalkylene chain it is ~~preferably~~ selected from the following structures:

a) $-(CF_2CF_2O)_m(CF_2O)_n(CF_2CF(CF_3)O)_p(CF(CF_3)O)_q-$;

b) $-(CF_2O)_n(CF_2CF(CF_3)O)_p(CF(CF_3)O)_q-$;

c) $-(CF_2CF_2O)_m(CF_2O)_n$;

wherein:

m is comprised between 0 and 100 extremes included;

n is comprised between 0 and 50 extremes included;

p is comprised between 0 and 100 extremes included;

q is comprised between 0 and 60 extremes included; and

m+n+p+q>0 ~~and the number average molecular weight of R_{f2} being in the above limited~~.

7. (Original) A process according to claim 6, wherein R_{f2} is a perfluorooxyalkylene c), and the m/n ratio ranges from 0.1 to 10, n being different from zero and the number average molecular weight comprised within the above limits.

8. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein in formula (I) R_h and R_{h2} having the following meanings:

$-CH_3$, $-CH_2CH_3$,

$-CH_2CH_2CH_3$, $-CH(CH_3)_2$, $-CH_2CH=CH_2$.

9. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the ion fluoride compound is any compound capable to generate ion fluorides when, in the presence of dipolar aprotic solvents, at temperatures from 20 °C up to 200 °C, said dipolar aprotic

solvents being acetonitrile, dimethyl-formamide, glyme, ethylene polyoxides dimethylethers (PEO-dimethylethers).

10. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 9, wherein the ion fluoride compound is selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of metal fluorides ~~, preferably alkaline or alkaline-earth metal fluorides~~; AgF; alkylammoniumfluorides, alkylphosphonium-fluorides, wherein the nitrogen and respectively the phosphor atom can be substituted with one or more C_1-C_8 alkyl groups, equal to or different from each other.

11. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 9, wherein the ion fluoride compound is CsF and KF.

12. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 9, wherein the catalyst is optionally supported.

13. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the catalyst amounts, expressed in % moles, are in the range 0.1% - 50% with respect to the mono- or bifunctional carbonyl compound of formula (IV).

14. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein the dipolar aprotic organic compound is selected from the group consisting of acetonitrile, dimethylformamide, glyme, ethylene polyoxides dimethylethers (PEO-dimethylethers.

15. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein the ratio by weight between the dipolar aprotic organic compound and the ion fluoride compound ranges from 1:100 to 100:1.

16. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein tertiary amines and/or phase transfer catalysts are used.

17. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein the reaction temperature in the process is from 60 °C to 200 °C.

18. (New) A process according to claim 1, carried out in a discontinuous way.

19. (New) A process according to claim 1, carried out in a continuous way.

20. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein R_f is a bivalent radical: C_2-C_{12}, linear or branched (per)fluoroalkylene, optionally containing one or more oxygen atoms.

21. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein R_h is a C_1-C_{10} linear, branched when possible, saturated or unsaturated when possible alkyl, optionally containing heteroatoms selected from F, O, N, S, P, Cl; and/or functional groups preferably selected from $-SO_2F$, $-CH = CH_2$, $-CH_2CH = CH_2$ and NO_2.

22. (New) A process according to claim 5, wherein R_{f2} is a perfluoropolyoxyalkylene chain having number average molecular weight from 100 to 5,000.

23. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein R_{f2} is a perfluoropolyoxyalkylene chain having number average molecular weight from 300 to 2,000.

24. (New) A process according to claim 10, wherein the metal fluorides are alkaline or alkaline-earth metal fluorides.

25. (New) A process according to claim 14, wherein the dipolar aprotic organic compound is tetraglyme or PEO-dimethylethers having number average molecular weight in the range 134 - 2,000.

26. (New) A process according to claim 17, wherein the reaction temperature in the process is from 80 °C to 150 °C.